

**Children's Justice Act Committee**  
**Staffed by the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention**  
**Thursday, December 6, 2018**  
**The Blue Ribbon Project**  
**45 Community Place**  
**Crownsville, MD 21032**  
**1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Participating Members:**

Detective Taylor Pyles, Chair, Annapolis Police Department  
Arnold Eby, Maryland Foster Parent Association  
Dr. Kerry Hannan, Baltimore Child Abuse Center  
Anne Hoyer, Office of the Secretary of State (phone)  
Sr. Deputy Robert Kovacs, Harford County Sheriff's Office (phone)  
Vernice McKee, Department of Human Services  
Diane Shaffer, Volunteer (phone)  
Krista Trahan, Baltimore County Department of Social Services

**Guests:**

Susan Hansell, Maryland Children's Alliance  
Joyce Lombardi, Baltimore Child Abuse Center

**Staff**

Glenn Fueston, Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention  
Kelly Gorman, Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention  
Sabraya Knight, Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention  
Jessica Wheeler, Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

The meeting was called to order at approximately 1:40 p.m. Members and guests introduced themselves.

Mr. Fueston recognized Mr. Eby for his service and dedication as a member of the Children's Justice Act Committee (CJAC) for 10 years and Chair for 8 years by presenting him with a Governor's Citation.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Eby made a motion to approve minutes. Dr. Hannan seconded the motion. All members were in favor and the minutes were approved.

### **III. Children's Advocacy Centers Legislation**

Ms. Hansell and Ms. Lombardi provided members with a presentation on proposed legislation impacting Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs). Ms. Hansell gave an overview of CACs and what their functions are. Ms. Lombardi gave a summary of the proposed bill. This bill would provide an additional \$3 million towards additional support and training to CACs and clarify the role of the CACs, among other things. A 3-year plan focusing on governance, sustainability, and standards of accreditation will be implemented to help achieve the goals of the CAC bill. Ms. Hansell and Ms. Lombardi will keep members apprised as the bill proceeds.

### **IV. HHS Information Memorandum**

Ms. Wheeler provided members with an information memorandum from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families regarding a shift in approach for child welfare agencies and Children's Bureau (CB) grantees. The Administration for Children and Families is the federal administrator of the Children's Justice Act program. The memorandum encourages agencies to collaborate with the courts and other agencies towards prevention strategies and strengthening families through primary prevention of child maltreatment and unnecessary parent-child separation. Additional guidance on the implementation of the information contained in the memorandum will be disseminated once it becomes available.

### **V. Child and Family Services Plan - Next Steps**

Ms. McKee provided members with an overview of the three goals in DHS' Child and Family Services Plan. Members felt it most appropriate for the Committee to focus on the goal of improving safety for all infants, children, and youth in the child welfare system. Ms. McKee facilitated a strategic planning session to develop objectives and outcomes for this goal, which will be reported back to DHS for consideration of inclusion in the Child and Family Services Plan moving forward.

### **VI. Subcommittee Updates**

#### *A. Training Subcommittee: Training Directory Update*

Detective Pyles informed members that the development of the Training Directory is still in progress and asked that members send any information on upcoming trainings to include in the directory. Members discussed what the most effective use of the directory would be and the best way to update it. The subcommittee will work to develop a plan to present to the Committee.

#### *B. Membership Subcommittee*

Ms. Wheeler informed members of a vacancy for the prosecutor seat. A candidate has been interviewed for the vacancy and is awaiting appointment. There are three members with expired terms as of November 1, 2018 and Ms. Wheeler is awaiting

confirmation as to whether they will seek re-appointment. Members were informed that a young adult with experience in the foster care system who spoke at the Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) Conference is interested in joining the committee.

## **VII. VOTE: Vice Chair**

Members appointed Dr. Hannan as the new Vice Chair of the Committee. Dr. Hannan thanked members for their support.

## **VIII. Old/New Business**

- 2019 Schedule of Meetings

Ms. Wheeler provided members with the 2019 schedule of meetings and informed them that meetings will remain on Thursdays at 1:30 p.m. in Crownsville. The major change is that the Committee will meet four times in 2019 versus six times as they have in the past. There will be more workgroup meetings in between the regular meetings. Members were reminded of the importance of attending all meetings in person and that conference calling should be limited as much as possible.

## **IX. The Blue Ribbon Project Tour**

Detective Pyles gave members a tour of The Blue Ribbon Project, a non-profit organization that provides assistance to youth in foster care and those who are survivors of child abuse and neglect. As founder, Detective Pyles informed members of his own personal experiences that drove him to create the organization that now operates in twelve counties in Maryland. The Blue Ribbon Project provides backpacks for children who are removed from their homes by the Department of Social Services. These “Backpacks of Love” contain essentials such as personal hygiene products, school supplies, and clothing. The organization provides resources for children to succeed in education and personal growth.

## **X. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:20 p.m.

### **Next Meeting:**

January 17, 2019

1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

100 Community Place

Crownsville, MD 21032